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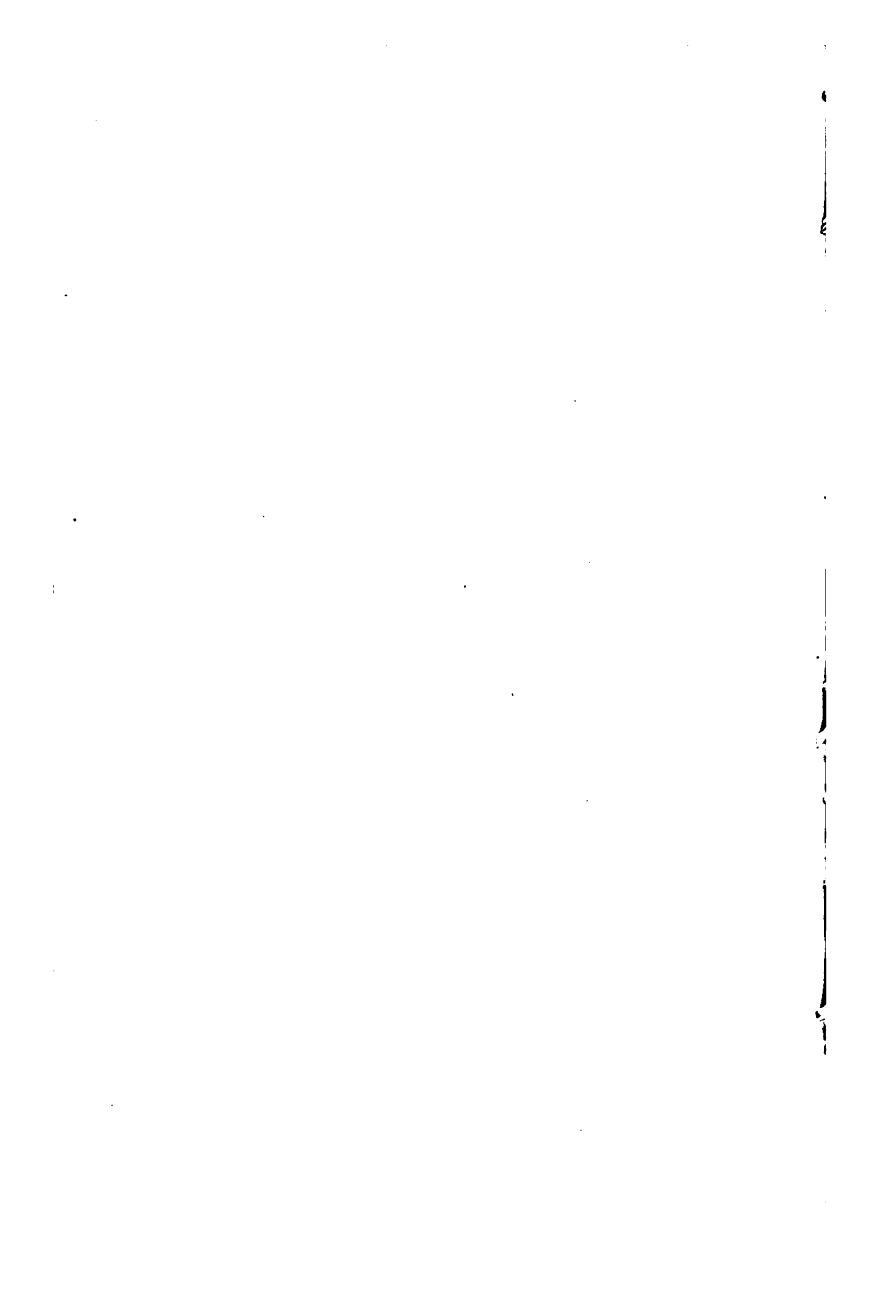
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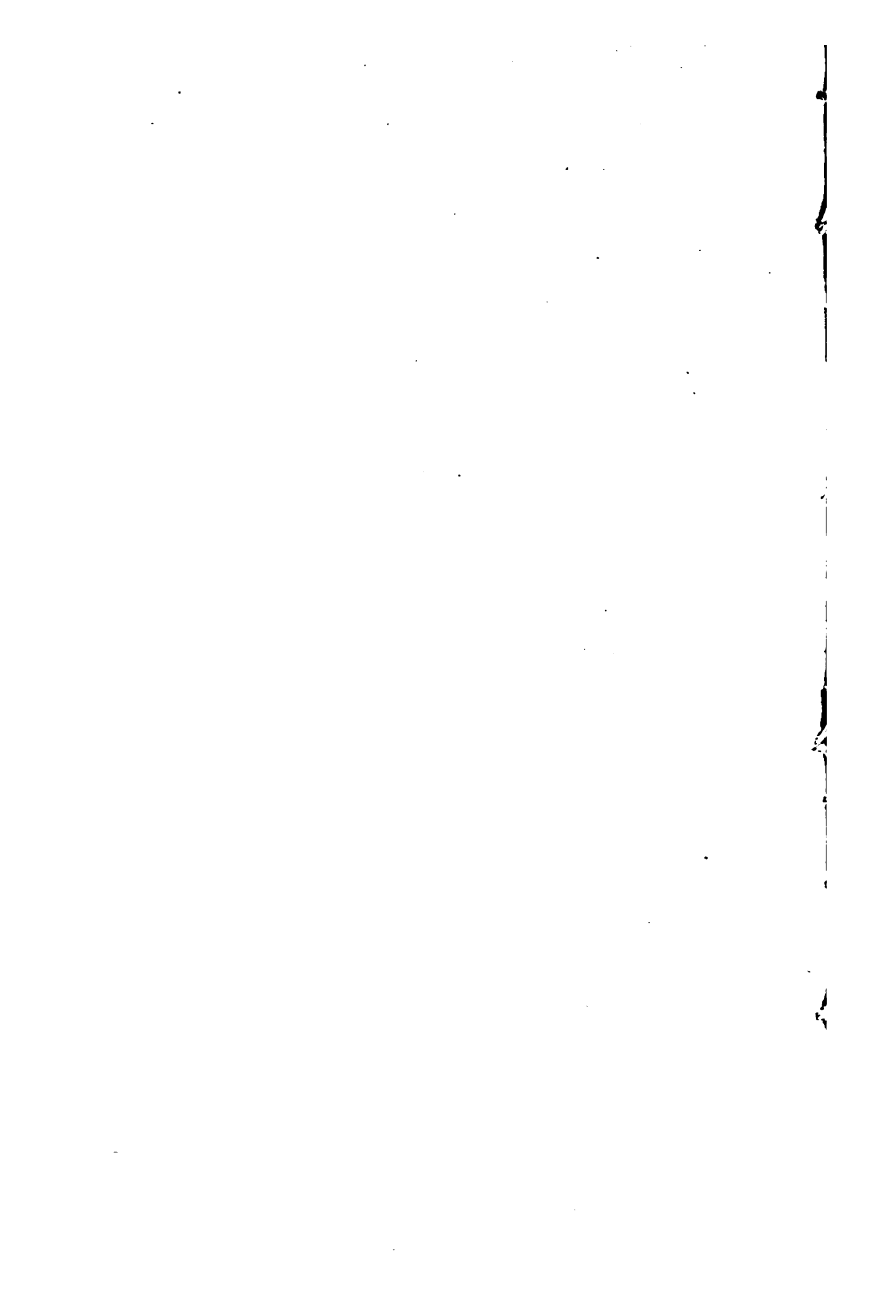
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•      KOOPMAN  
POETICAL WORKS

V.









*W. L. Koefman.*

# THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

AND OTHER POEMS

BY  
HARRY LYMAN KOOPMAN

BOSTON, MASS.  
THE EVERETT PRESS, PUBLISHERS  
1908

TRANS. TO CENTRAL STEREA

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To  
*MARY and KARL*  
with  
*Their Father's Love*

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# THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT





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## PREFATORY NOTE

**I**N the very heart of the Libyan Desert, the most barren and inaccessible portion of the great Sahara, is situated one of the most influential libraries of the modern world. It is the great library at the headquarters of the Senussi brotherhood, which is the chief unifying force in modern Islam. Hither, to the oasis of Kufra, the central government of the brotherhood moved about 1893 from its former seat in Jarabub, which occupies a more exposed position about three hundred miles further north on the border between Egypt and Tripoli. Jarabub still remains the burial-place of the great founder of the order, and supersedes Mecca as an object of pilgrimage, not only for the followers of the Mahdi, but even for other Mussulmans. The great library, however, which was formed by the Mahdi's learned brother, to whom was entrusted the charge of ecclesiastical affairs and education, was removed to Kufra. Its transportation required five hundred, some say eight hundred, camels. From this remote center the Mahdi stretches out his influence, for good or evil, over the whole Mohammedan world. Most writers accuse the Senussi of political designs, and look to see them lead all Islam in a revolt against Christianity and European civilization. To other authorities, like Professor Toy, they "appear to have for their object merely to secure a territory in which they may retain their customs and practise their religion in peace." The latter view is essentially that which I have ascribed to the Senussi Librarian, into whose mouth I have put my poem. The reader who wishes may pursue the subject further in Arthur Silva White's volume, "From Sphinx to Oracle."

# PROPERTY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

WHERE the giant stairs lead down,  
Bowlders, and shingle, and sand,  
From the lofty northern land  
That fronts the far blue main,  
To the vale of the Sacred Town,—  
Where low on the southern plain  
The wizard of Heat and Drouth,  
With a sunbeam for a wand,  
Upbuilds his world of deceit,  
Palm grove and rippling pond  
And garden and cool retreat,—  
Even from north to south,  
O'er the shimmering desert's face,  
My laden file I trace,  
My peaceful marching line;  
Yet the mightiest army, I ween,  
To conquer a darkened world,  
The desert's eye hath seen,  
Since Okba's troop was hurled,  
In the might of the Prophet's word,  
From the Nile to the trackless brine:—  
Yea, into the sea he rode,  
And, baring to heaven his sword,  
He cried: "Did not the deep,  
O Allah, my prowess tame,

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Westward still would I sweep,  
And the knowledge of Thy law,  
In mercy on man bestowed,  
Yet wider spread, and the awe  
That is due to Thy holiest Name."

Nay, never with mine may dare  
The mightiest army compare,  
Not even Iskander's own,  
Which hewed the world to a throne.  
Nor more my little worth  
To glory like theirs must yield  
Than the mightiest armies of earth  
To the victor host I wield;  
For not against spear and shield,  
Nor the strength of a man's right arm,  
Nor the speed of a horse's feet,  
Nor the arrow's, deadlier fleet,  
Nor the unseen bullet's harm,—  
Not against these they war,  
The weakness of men and brutes,  
But against the demon powers  
Behind the clouds that lurk,  
That fly under heaven free,  
That burrow in dank and mirk  
Below the mountains' roots,  
That haunt the caves of the sea,  
That beleaguer these hearts of ours,  
And God and His Prophet abhor.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Four are the legions of might  
That muster at my command:  
The first is the awful WORD,  
Eternal, uncreate,  
Yea! dateless with God's own date,  
Unuttered and unheard,  
But written in rays of light  
On the mighty table of stone,  
Where future and past are shown,  
That leans at God's right hand.  
Thence, for the weal of men,  
In a book whose leaves are gold,  
That jewels and silk enfold,  
That was writ with an angel's pen,  
It was brought from its high estate  
Through the heavens to the lowest heaven  
By Gabriel — such God's plan —  
In the blessed, mystic even,  
On the night of power and fate,  
In the month of Ramadan.  
But not, O crystal sphere,  
In thee lay the Word concealed.  
God willed that year by year  
Its truths to the Prophet's ear  
Should, line upon line, be revealed;  
Whether, with chime of bells,  
Gabriel the message tells;  
Or thoughts, with silence shod,  
From the Holy Spirit come

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Into the secret place  
Of the heart; or the very God,  
Veiled, or face to face,  
By day or in dreams of the night,  
Speaks, and the heavens bloom bright,  
Speaks, and the hells are dumb.

The next of the legions arrayed  
To conquer at my command,  
To quell the hosts of the banned,  
The holy TRADITIONS be,  
That age unto age enshrine  
The wisdom, the power to aid,  
Of the Prophet's words divine  
To his friends, the trusted few;  
With the holy deeds of his hand  
That were done for their eyes to see,  
An example of deeds to do  
In every time and land.  
These in men's hearts locked fast,  
Unto children's children told,  
And onward as heirlooms passed,  
Richer than lands or gold,  
After long centuries flown,  
By holy men at last  
Were gathered and made known,—  
Saints enlightened by prayer  
To mirror the Prophet's heart,  
To winnow the false from the true,



## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

To sift the weak from the strong,  
The low from the lofty to part.  
For "Wo be unto you  
If ye utter my sayings wrong!  
But guard them with anxious care:  
And be mindful that ye assign  
No words to me save ye know  
In truth they are surely mine."  
So, in warning and ruth,  
Spake the Prophet long ago.  
And lo! the Traditions abide,  
Mighty to strengthen and guide,  
To chasten, to check, to impel,  
To comfort, reprove, inspire,  
And weak are the weapons of hell,  
And they fall in fruitless ire  
On the sunbright shields of the Truth.

Behold, as they pass in review,  
The legions of the CONSENT!  
The mustering of the Laws,  
The saying and doing blent  
Of the learned and devout,  
Men who saw clear and true,  
Not fools in their folly blind,  
Nor drunken with pride of doubt,  
Nor scoffers that, snarling behind,  
Snap at the heels of the Cause;

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

But the first of the Blessed, they,  
The Prophet's helpers at need,  
The mates of the Banishment,  
The followers of the Flight.  
Nor had these been all, but their seed  
In every age might we count,  
Had God for our sins not sent  
Wrangling and fell despite,  
Which have blinded our eyes to the way  
That leads to his holy fount.  
But yet shall the Faithful learn  
The last, first lesson of Peace;  
And the precious flood shall return  
No more to the empty sands,  
But be dipped by men's eager hands,  
And the world's long thirst shall cease;  
And, forgetting its fevered years,  
Islam shall forward leap,  
As the panting hart, that deep  
Has drunk of a hidden rill,  
Leaps and forgets its fears;  
And they that strove shall be still,  
And the evil shall cease from scathe,  
And Islam, rousing its youth  
As a mighty man from a swoon,  
Shall renew its morn of Faith,  
And the triumphs of its Truth  
Shall round to a fadeless noon.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Last of my legions four,  
The DECISIONS of the wise,  
The new and the newer lore  
That still from the old arise;  
Yea, the new Truth wrought from the old  
For the needs of the newer day,  
Never the old to gainsay,  
For the Truth is eternally true,  
But only the old made new,  
As a tale to the young retold.  
The sun that smiled on the morn  
Of the holy Prophet's birth  
Rose to-day on the earth,  
New to the new day born;  
Even so, after centuries rolled,  
The Truth abides the same;  
And so long as sin its net  
Shall spread, and the heedless fall  
And for light in the darkness call,  
Truth unto Truth shall be set,  
And a new Truth forth shall flare,  
As a new flame lightens the air,  
When flame has been set to flame.

So march to victories new  
My legions with victory bright.  
But, lo! in their train a host  
Of warriors, doughty and true,  
Heroes, although they boast

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Only a mortal might.  
The Roots of the Law they hight,  
The Creeds from the one creed wrought,  
The Renderings of the Laws,  
The Comments on the Word,  
The History of the Cause,  
The Rules of Thought Unheard,  
The Arts of the Spoken Thought.  
Last, as if led in chains,  
Follow in captive ranks  
The books, in motley guise,  
Of the lore of the prying Franks,  
Who spare not earth nor sky,  
Nor future nor moldering past,  
But search with tireless pains,  
If haply some golden grains  
Of fact they may find at last;  
Yet, never with knowledge wise,  
And wretched for all their gains,  
In doubt they live and die.

Mightiest force among men,  
And swiftest fleeting, the breath;  
Speech, whose birth is a death;  
For, the ear of the hearer to reach,  
On the speaker's lips it must die;  
And, heard and uttered by each,  
And uttered and heard again,  
Who shall say for a sooth

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

That its message has not been wrought  
In the limbec of men's thought  
From the Truth to a semblance of Truth,  
Which at heart is wholly a lie?  
But the Book was born, and lo!  
Like a footprint on the strand  
That has hardened into stone,  
The Truth, released from change,  
Outlasting ruler and throne,  
Abides, while centuries range,  
While nations ebb and flow,  
In every time and land,  
The Truth; else none might know  
The thoughts of the great of yore.  
For, ever the newer speech  
The newer thought would teach,  
Under the sheltering fame  
Of the wise and ancient lore;  
And the Truth — like the desert mound  
Slow shifting day by day,  
Till, ere one marks, it is found  
New-shapen and far away —  
Would be changed in all but name,  
Not abide, like the hills, the same,  
Flashing the morn abroad  
From their iron crests, which took  
The rose of creation's dawn —  
Themselves the earliest book,  
On whose carven crags, deep-drawn,  
Stands written the will of God.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Faint on the paling sky,  
The wolf-tail's white foreruns  
The dawn's quick-coming red;  
And our prayers go up on high  
To the Lord of dawns and suns.  
Then flames like darts are sped,  
And lo, the sun! and anon  
O'er the rosy mists he has clomb,  
The terrors of night are gone,  
The day with its cheer has come.  
Then southward, southward still,  
Under the opaline arch,  
Over the quivering sand,  
And mocked on every hand  
By the shifting mirage, we march;  
Past shadowless mountains of thirst,  
Through valleys with never a rill,—  
Rivers that God has cursed,  
That bleach with the bones of their doom.  
At last in a veil of white  
The sun goes down, and the west  
Is a garden of fiery bloom;  
And the prayers of the Faithful rise,  
And beast and man take rest,  
And the stars ope their myriad eyes,  
And he that gave day gives night.  
So, day after day,  
For a score of days we press  
Ever our southward way

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Through a wilder wilderness,  
To the region set apart  
In the desert's deepest heart  
To shelter our sacred lore.  
There at last shall we halt,  
Where the oasis lies enisled  
In a hundred leagues of sand  
That surge on every hand,  
By the hot winds driven and piled,  
Barren as ashes or salt.  
But, to the Faithful's eyes,  
A blessed bound it lies,  
No foeman shall pass o'er.  
Yea, in the desert's deep  
To their grave in the sands might go  
Army on army sent  
To work our mission scathe,  
And we should awake and sleep  
And awake, and never know  
Evil deed or intent,  
Safe in our Stronghold of Faith.

O Desert, vouchsafed to be,  
From all eternity,  
The shelter of God's Truth,  
As God's compassion large,  
And lasting as the will  
That wrought thee and endueth,  
Receive thy priceless charge!

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Accept the casket we bring  
Of God's provisioning  
For the healing of men's ill.  
So guard it from every taint  
Of the Unfaith that fills the earth,  
That from it shall go forth,  
Like rays of the strong sun's light,  
The healing of Truth to fill  
The lands where men sicken and faint,  
In the twilight of Faith or its night.  
All is confusion there  
And blindness and whirling haste;  
The days of their lives men waste  
In hurrying everywhere,  
And arriving nowhere at last.  
They cannot see God's sky  
For the smoke of their ceaseless toil,  
And earth shows dull and awry  
Through the dust of their mad turmoil.  
But here, in the desert's hush,  
In the crystal of its air,  
Which is healing more than art,  
Where naught with din or rush  
Distracts the ear or eye,  
But lion and lizard wear  
The desert's tawny dye,  
And a bowshot from the bound  
Of his palms man hears no sound  
But the beating of his heart;



## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Where, beyond the garden's green,  
Only the infinite sheen  
Of the desert spreads around;  
And, day by day the same,  
The sun on his opal throne,  
Crowned with the gold of noon,  
Sits in his veil of flame;  
And night by night the moon  
Reigns in splendor alone;  
Or the stars, like jewels sewn  
On the blue-black robe of night,  
Blaze, and the world is bright; —  
Here, and only here,  
Of all earth's regions trod,  
Stands man, with vision clear,  
Alone with the only God;  
And the Truth forevermore  
From the desert, as ever of yore,  
On earth shall be shed abroad;  
And the gardens of earth that bloom,  
The gardens no less shall become  
Of the holy Faith, and man,  
In the desert brought face to face  
With the infinite blessing and ban,  
Shall live in every place  
As under the eye of God.

# THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

## IN MARCH\*

THE bright new grass pricks through the "sugar  
snow,"

The budded elm-tops wrestle to and fro,  
And on the washed blue sky thin clouds a-fraying  
Southeastward blow.

The life of spring that starts in blade and bud,  
The strong unrest that sweeps yon flying scud,  
With salt, ancestral, Viking hungers tingle  
And tease my blood.

Now is the time for putting off from shore,  
For smiting ice-cold waves with ashen oar,  
Seeking the Southlands, less for gold and conflict  
Than life the more.

But earth is tamed; — where crept the Viking's  
keel,  
Now flies a caravansary of steel,  
And war's own weapons against war are pointed  
By public weal.

\*From this point onward the poems are arranged substantially in order  
of time.

## IN MARCH

And we, with all our Berserk heritage  
Of love for alien seas and battle-rage,  
Find round ourselves, born for an age of iron,  
    This paper age.

Yet blithe to-day beckons the twinkling sea,  
To shores unknown and life at large and free; —  
'T is March, the winds blow seaward, and my being  
    Would with them flee!

1899.

## TO ELIZABETH AKERS

*On the publication of The Sunset Song*

Just the gods are, and they were not willing  
Any heart should bear a double burden.  
So it is that, when they gave to woman  
    Love and its anguish,

Man they made the singer and the seer,  
Laid on him the burden of the message,  
Bade him voice the gladness and the travail  
    Borne by the world-soul.

So man sang; but ever, as they listened,  
Something lacked, some depth of pain unfathomed,  
Some starred height of self-outsoaring rapture  
    He could not compass.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Something too they missed of patient, lowly  
Insight into being unawakened,  
Fellowship with root and stalk and tendril,  
Shadow and silence;

Missed the lore of soul outrunning insight,  
Oneness with all Nature's tendernesses,  
Mother-love bending o'er earth as o'er her  
Slumbering infant.

Melodies they missed of spheral music,  
Thrilling men's hearts to no strain responsive,  
Harmonies of heaven that, rolling earthward,  
Wakened no echo.

So sometimes the gods on hearts of women  
Lay of love and song the double burden;  
Such the fatal dower of Lesbian Sappho,  
Telian Erinna.

Still of Sappho lisp Leucadian surges,  
Still the distaff murmurs of Erinna;  
But their charge the gods in love and pity  
Lay on the living.

Thee to-day we crown with love and praises,  
Thee who long this load hast borne and bearest;  
One in fate with them of old, we hail thee  
One in the triumph!

1902.

## ELIZABETH

### ELIZABETH

GRIEVE not that, one by one,  
The tender names are gone,  
That lips no longer press  
Thy fragrant, shining tress,  
While oft the love-name sweet  
Of daughter they repeat;  
Nor that the fond words known  
To lovers' lips alone  
Are silent many a year;  
Nor that the name most dear  
Of all the air can bring  
No more doth round thee ring,  
But, heard, if heard at all,  
'T is but the echo's call,  
'T is but the night wind's cheat,  
The flickering log's deceit.

Unweeting still must Art  
Its highest gift impart.  
Before our eyes it spreads  
The glamor Beauty sheds;  
But Beauty ne'er alone  
Was on the canvas thrown,  
Was never carved nor sung,  
But still above it hung  
The Vision it sets free,  
Of Immortality.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

What shall the heart not give  
Attended so to live?  
Can we then silent be,  
Who owe such boon to thee?  
So, when in rooms they filled  
The love-tones all are stilled,  
Dwell not in silence drear;  
Open thy windows, hear  
What myriad voices press  
To thank thee and to bless.

## CLOUD

THE sun that rose in crystal skies  
An eyebeam caught from Stella's eyes,  
Which so in brightness him surpast  
He sulked and grew with clouds o'ercast.

## TO-DAY

*Morning*

HERE are the lists! Upon the bloody sands  
In coal-black armor shrouded, silent, grim,  
With naked blade, my foe, to stay me, stands,—  
But am not I alike unknown to him?

## TO-DAY

### *Evening*

After a thousand strokes received and given,  
Bleeding I lie, but master of the field.  
Yet, had I known his might, durst I have striven?—  
My foe's, who died but knew not how to yield!

## THE BEST GIFT

ALREADY had the army of the Greeks,  
Soldiers of Fortune's frown, marched forth and back  
Two thousand miles, two years of toil and pain.  
Sardis, Colossæ, Tarsus, cities marked  
For Christian fame; great Nimrod's ancient hold;  
Iconium, Phrygia's jewel; Thapsacus,  
The spoil of Solomon; the rocky Gates;  
The far-sought, fatal Babylonian plain,—  
These and their hopes long since lay far behind.  
Later, with sword in hand, the Greeks had pressed  
Through what fell passes, o'er what wastes of snow,  
Till suddenly, from the blest Armenian height,  
They saw and hailed with tears of joy the Sea!  
Nor ended here their strife, but followed close  
Battle with wilderness and wilder men;  
While, these o'erpassed, and help of kinsman due,  
Hatred and craft and cruelty still barred  
Their way to Grecian soil and wife and child.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

To them thus harassed sent the King of Thrace,  
Seuthes, the disinherited, seeking aid  
In battle to win back his father's throne.  
Gladly they heard and freely gave consent.  
Seuthes, rejoicing in his new allies,  
Bade the Greek generals to his banquet-hall,  
There seating them beside his Thracian lords  
And foreign envoys; but the highest seat,  
Next to his own, he gave to Xenophon.  
While now the wine went round, a Thracian came,  
Leading into the hall a snow-white horse;  
And, taking up a brimming horn, he said:  
"To you I drink, O Seuthes, and I give  
This horse, upon whose back shall you o'ertake  
Whomso you will, and no pursuer dread."  
Another brought a boy, and, giving him,  
Drank to the monarch. Following him came one  
With costly garments for the queen. Then more,  
After the ancient custom of the land,  
That so their king might have wherewith to dower  
His friends as they should need, offered the king  
Rich cups or carpets or like precious gifts.  
The turn had now reached Xenophon, who sat  
With neither goods nor money, but he rose  
And, boldly taking in his hand the horn,  
He said: "I give to you, O king, myself  
And these my comrades, all your faithful friends,  
All free and glad supporters of your cause.  
Behold us now before you, asking naught



## THE BEST GIFT

But to face toils and dangers for your sake;  
And, if the gods will, by our help shall you  
Win not alone the land your father swayed,  
But hearts of men and women, who shall throng  
To bring you gifts and hail you as their king.”  
Seuthes arose and shared the pledge; then both,  
In token of alliance, on their robes  
Sprinkled the last drops of the ruddy wine.

The Greeks upon the morrow took the field,  
And Seuthes sat upon his father's throne.

## THE THREE MIGHTY

THREE mighty sweep o'er earth, unheeding  
Or ban, or troop, or wall;  
They halt not, but are ever speeding  
Where thrones or idols fall.

One, a star-beam shot from heaven,  
And one, a whirlwind sound,  
And one the shock of the fiery levin  
That rends the solid ground.

First flies Thought, on heaven's altars  
Flamed and winged for speed;  
Next the Word, which cries nor falters;  
And last, the perfect Deed.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

### LETHE

YEA, Lethe current durst I ford with thee;  
For, though it washed all memory away  
Of what we are and were, seeing each other,  
We should but rush together open-armed,  
Doubly imparadised in our love's renewal.  
As health from sleep, so should our wedded love  
From Lethe rise new-born to ardor new.

### THE NEWSPAPER

THIS is the ass that every day comes laden with  
goods from the ends of the earth;  
And, ass that he is, he noisily boasts the worth of  
his pack his asinine worth.

### THE PRIEST OF ISHTAR

THROUGH clouds high-domed as ne'er on earthly sky  
Sinks huge a fiery sun, pulsing with flame  
Down to the last thin edge. Anon, as Glory  
Dazzles with masquerade when Power is gone,  
The sky bursts into bloom; all hues at once —  
From the pale rose intolerably bright,

## THE PRIEST OF ISHTAR

Shot from the sunken rim, to the eastern verge  
Misty with violet — enkindling, vie.  
So smit with splendor lies that heavenlier world  
A human eye that saw were stricken blind.  
Not so the eyes of them that throng the ways  
Leading to yonder tower. In laughing eyes  
They look and laugh, nor turn for light beyond.  
White-flaming on that sea of shifting flame,  
A star pursues the sun, and eyes that mark  
Suddenly laugh no more, but questioning turn  
To where upon the tower a lonely form,  
Heedless of sunken sun or following star  
Or cloudy miracle, stands all intent  
On the dim line that bounds the darkling east.  
The figure lifts an arm; the babble dies  
Into a breathless hush, wherein each hears  
But his own heart-throbs and the lapsing rill.  
He lifts the other arm, crying, "They are risen!"  
And all the waiting multitude with one voice,  
Like pent-up waters loosened by the sun,  
Shouts, "They are risen!" Then, with arms out-  
stretched,  
The priest proclaims, "So long as love divine  
Cherishes mortal weakness, so long as yonder  
Mine image, Nana, cherishes thine own  
In Annunit, so long shall I in love  
And mercy look on Ishtar. Though in Nebo  
My wrath is writ in flame; though for a night  
And yet a night I draw into myself

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

The sign of my forbearance; yet my favor  
Shall not forsake thee wholly while in heaven  
The symbol of my pity shines renewed."  
He ceases and lets fall his arms, the throng  
Rolls upward through the gloom a single voice:  
"We have hearkened the words of the Lord which  
ages gone

He answered by the mouth of his holy priest,  
When first our fathers' fathers, driven by fear  
Of quickly coming night with its dark and cold,  
Besought the all-giving Sun that he would grant  
A sign to them that he would not for ever  
Hide his face from them, but that every night,  
The longest night, should end at last in day.  
To-night, O Lord, their children's children, we  
Give thee our thanks and praise that thou didst set  
The symbol of thy mercy in the east.  
Nor less that thou didst hang above the west  
The swift and threatening image of thy wrath.  
We have heard and seen, O Lord, let our hearts  
give heed!"

They cease; anon, as pebbles on a bank,  
When one has set a foot too near the edge,  
Sweep downward with a widening rush and din,  
So sweeps the crowd, its anxious rite performed,  
With sudden stir and clamor down the hill.  
Soon through the gathering darkness lamps flash  
out,

And upward to the lone form on the tower

## THE PRIEST OF ISHTAR

Float from among the lamps the mingled strains  
Of harps and voices and the clink of cups.  
Silent he stands, his eyes fixed on the east,  
Where, mantling all the purple dark with gold,  
Swing upward the twain planets, Nana, large,  
Radiant, benign, and, beaming sweet response,  
The less, but glowing, Annunit. Already  
Their light treads down the vapors and illumines  
The watcher's face, and on the westward lawn  
Marks faint the tower in shadow. At length the  
priest  
Kneels, and with arms outstretched to the orbèd  
pair,  
Breaks forth in words, but every word a sob:  
"Still backward roll beneath the feet of men  
The irreclaimable years into the gulf  
Unfilled by years or centuries. Still with pain  
Men heap their debt of sin. The soil of Ishtar  
Is watered with the blood of innocence.  
Forever the new day of righteousness  
Rises in flame and blood, only to sink  
In blood and flame. Still wields the strong his  
might  
Not to uplift but trample down the weak,  
Till he in turn is by a stronger still  
Downtrodden; but not even so is justice done.  
O Pity of God, O let me turn to where  
Thou shinest in thy twofold radiance  
Above the darkling east! O thou abode

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Of love supernal! How they bask and bloom,  
Unvext by storm, unstained by blood of strife,  
Thy peaceful meadows! And thou, of mortal trust  
O image radiant, how tenderly  
Rained on thy mounts of aspiration fall  
The beams of guardian Love! Oh! let them fall,  
Still fall, though dimly, faintly from afar,  
On strife-worn Ishtar, till at last they burn  
Into the souls of men, yea, until Ishtar,  
Aglow with heavenly love, herself shall shine  
Back upon Nana and Annunit, even Ishtar,—  
O thought, O hope too high for mortal heart! —  
An image of the Holiest, raying clear  
The love divine across the gulf of night!”

NOTE. — The poem pictures a religion on the planet Venus derived from a contemplation of our earth and its moon. To an inhabitant of Venus the sun appears larger and brighter than to us. The earth, with its attendant moon, presents a spectacle unequalled in beauty by any celestial object visible to us, or, in fact, to the inhabitants of any planet in our system. The earth appears larger than Venus does to us, it shines with a softer light, and the moon, at varying distances from it, shines with the brilliance of Sirius in our own heavens. They are usually seen against a dark sky, not against a twilight sky, as Venus is by us. Mercury in the sky of Venus is comparable, if not equal, in splendor to Venus as seen from the earth. Ishtar is Venus; Nebo, Mercury; Nana, the earth; Annunit, the moon.

## QUATRAINS

### QUATRAINS

BEAR witness I have given  
Into no man's hand the keeping of my soul,  
And though my life scarce hints of the perfect whole,  
'T is I that have slipped and striven.

I, unto sadness born,  
Here watch the day's last red to black give place;  
But, stationed under other skies, my face  
This hour were flushed with morn.

### MEED AND MERIT

OURS is the fault of the eye,  
Which kens but the outer show,  
Which cannot pierce to the core,  
But ever mistakes the hollow  
For solid and weighty and firm,  
The empty for the full;  
Pleased with the painted shell,  
Demands not a kernel within.

So, since first men learned  
To live, not each alone,  
But each with all allied,  
The nations, with shallow thought,

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Ever have more esteemed  
The building of the house  
Than living nobly therein;  
Ever have throned and crowned  
The guides of ploughshare and sail,  
The masters of kine and coin,  
The wethers of human flocks,  
The framers of pacts and rules,  
Not them who, mixing soul  
With sound in a spherul chime,  
Nor them who, revealing on earth  
The heavens of hue and form,  
Teach men to live as gods.

## THE ICEBERG

WHAT wonderworld is this beneath the moon,  
The slant, inverted moon of latter night,  
What city strange, dim drifting into sight,  
With roofs and towers and spires crowding aboon,  
And frowning walls with many a cresset strewn,  
But, dusk, or glimmering, fashioned all of white,  
And moving slow, in winds' and waves' despite,  
From shores of night and frost to gulfs of noon?

Far, far below, unseen, a mountain form,  
Tugged by the slow, blind currents of the deep,  
Rears this fantastic top to sun and storm.



## THE ICEBERG

Anon huge battlements downcrashing leap,  
The swayed bulk, overset, upheaves enorm,  
Toppling the phantom city down the steep.

## THE FAULT OF THE AGE

"His faults were but his age's faults," you say.  
Who makes an age, I ask, its gold or clay?  
If one you find who walks in morning's light,  
Dare you excuse the rest for deeds of night?

## BEYOND THE SUNSET

DAY, with your sovran splendor, Night, with your  
gentle beams,  
Sunset, with fleeting glories blended of deeds and  
dreams,  
Are ye not Light, at flood or ebb on the skyey shore,  
Or shattered on reefs of Cloudland? Yea, we are  
this and more.  
For we are ordained the seasons wherein the sons of  
earth  
Shall toil, shall sink in slumber, shall taste their  
sop of mirth.  
And yet are ye more and greater, for a wizard glass  
are ye

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Wherein man may behold what was, what is, and  
what yet shall be.

Though the many care not, dare not, to read the  
weird ye show,

For the weal of man were ye wrought; as for us,  
we will look and know.

Our fathers' fathers, raptured by Sunset's living  
bloom,

Appalled by the shadowless Noontide and Night's  
engulfing gloom,

Looked on this flaming cloud-world, with earth  
and sea alight,

As the world that is, by Noontide obscured as even  
by Night.

Our fathers, doughtier heroes than any Gama un-  
fearing

The wild Cape's guardian specter, or any Colombo  
steering

Forth and away from land sheer down the gulfs of  
dread,

Our fathers dared to sail where no sea was, men  
said;

But they proclaimed the sea where Truth, un-  
shrined, unveiled,

Floats within mortal ken; into that sea they sailed,  
Into the light of Day, which none before had dared;

And what they found and won we all our lives have  
shared.

## BEYOND THE SUNSET

Yea, in the span of a rounded life, behold them  
wrest

Secrets profounder, more, from Nature's close-  
locked breast

Than all men had won before them, since ever the  
cave-man first

Smote the flint, and Fire, forthflaming to serve him,  
burst.

No wonder our fathers proclaim their eyes have  
discovered "the Truth;"

We give them our grateful praise; and we own it  
the simple sooth

When they name it "Naught but the Truth," their  
revelation of Day;

But, when they bid us hail it "the Whole Truth,"  
can we obey?

For, sun estranging from sun, broad-stretching,  
weird and dread,

Is not the veil of Night with its mystic legend un-  
read?

Dare we affirm that its folds harbor not truths more  
rare

Than any the sapphire Noon showers through its  
golden air?

Would we see a picture clearly, we shade our eyes  
from the light;

Would we look on the thronèd sun and behold his  
face aright,

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

We temper his beams to our weakness; and may  
it not even so  
Be found that the vault of Day, with its all-reveal-  
ing glow,  
Yet veils from our feeble sense, who knows what  
celestial fires?  
Shall we not then gird our loins, and, worthy sons  
of our sires,  
Following not in their steps, but vowed to the self-  
same goal,  
Widen the bounds of knowledge till they front on  
the infinite whole?  
Let us, like them, be bold to steer where flag ne'er  
flew,  
Ay! though we dash our prow on the Noontide's  
cliffs of blue.  
We are sick of the Sunset's fancies, we are starved  
with the facts of Day;  
Yield us, O Night, the Truth, which alone is our  
life and stay!

Yea, we will face the Night! Pity nor scorn will  
we heed;  
But, if Darkness utter a voice, or blazon a mes-  
sage to read,  
That will we share with men. So let the Sunset  
flare;  
We have watched it how oft aforetime when we  
deemed that the Truth was there,

## BEYOND THE SUNSET

Flashed for a moment's comfort to cheer our drooping  
faith!

Now, let it fade as it flamed; we know 't is but  
Noontide's wraith.

And, if nothing to hear or to see pierce through the  
chill and the dank,

Then at least shall we know that the world is on  
one half blank.

Night we shall know to be naught, her shade from  
our lives we will cast,

Ceasing with seraphs or specters to people the  
shuddering vast.

But, brief is our time of doubt; ere the wingèd  
afterglow

Is wan of its hovering crimson, before us, above  
us, lo!

And on either hand, through the deepening gloom,  
looks down a star,

Not framed in our vault of blue, but throned be-  
yond measure afar.

Tender, majestic, patient, mild — oh! what are we,  
For whom ye have waited so long, who have dared  
not look and see!

Now is the air, as with incense, purple-flooded  
with light,

The stars burn larger adown it, and fresh on the  
wondering sight

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Other and farther beacons, wherever the eye may  
turn,  
Shatter the dark into splendor, till naught but  
light we discern,  
Till we stand, forgetful of earth, lost in awe and  
amaze  
At the newer heavens unfolding, whereof, amid  
Noontide's blaze,  
We never had guessed a glimmer; and still the  
depths expand;  
With a baldric of silver sheen is the jewelled  
heaven spanned.  
So thickly sown are the lights that our vision fails,  
and is fain  
To deem they no longer shine, but fall in a crystal  
rain.  
The waters that lie at our feet, which had kindled  
with Sunset's glow,  
Quiver with snowy radiance arched in their depths  
below.  
And the tiniest beam, who knows but 't is poured  
by some Lord of Day  
Unto worlds in whose eyes our sun faints to as  
feeble a ray?  
Then we bare our heads to the stars, no conquer-  
ors, we, of the Night,  
But conquered, humbled, abashed, silent, beneath  
the might

## BEYOND THE SUNSET

Of the merciful Truth revealed, we had dared so  
long to doubt,  
We had dared so long to deny, so long to perish  
without!

O ye who read in faith but the child-man's nurs-  
ery rhyme,  
In hope of immortal life but a waking dream of  
his prime,  
You we summon to gaze on this infinite vast laid  
bare,  
Wherein your Noonday world is adrift as a mote  
in the air,  
The Universe unveiled, which has waited since  
time began,  
Outwatching the weary ages till man should at last  
be man,  
Should turn from the Sunset's riddle, not back to  
Noonday skies,  
But forward, beyond the Sunset, where only its an-  
swer lies.

So we return from our voyage, from the Night and  
its new-found shore;  
We have only touched on the strand, not ours to  
encamp, to explore,  
To inhabit, — these are the tasks, unending, of  
gladness and gain

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

That await your happier hands, O sons of the  
years of our pain.  
What the Sunset guessed and the Noontide missed  
ye shall find in the Night —  
The Truth behind truth, the Faith behind faith,  
the Right behind right!

## THE BIRD IN THE BUSH

SINCE thy singing first I heard  
Long ago, thou teasing bird,  
Still I seek and panting follow  
Over hill and plain and hollow,  
Stayed by thicket, slowed by stream,  
Gladdened by a rainbow gleam  
Flashed amid thy music's hush;  
Then a stronger, wilder gush  
Of thy witch-note checks my foot,  
Charms me even from pursuit;  
And I pause, how long I know not,  
Till thy trancing measures flow not,  
Then I start with new insistence,  
Till again, in mazy distance,  
Of thy plumes a glint I catch,  
Of thy song a lilting snatch;  
But my hand I never place  
On thy flitting hue and grace,  
Never hear thy song complete,



## THE BIRD IN THE BUSH

Still pursuing, ne'er to meet,  
Hurried by thy flattering lure  
On to something sweeter, newer.

Fond evasion, dear elusion,  
Bliss and bale in madding fusion,  
Thou, they say, of poets art  
Sole inheritance and part  
In the lavish goods of earth;  
But, without thee, what were worth?  
So thy flight I follow blest;  
Let the world keep all the rest!

## OUR GREEKS

THEY gathered reeking from tan-pit,  
Or grimy-pale from the mines,  
Or adust and awry from the work-bench,  
To charge at Seven Pines.

*Dreamed, Nov. 18, 1904.*

## CUORE

*To Charles Alexander Nelson*

HERE'S to the heart of a man  
That abides the heart of a boy;  
That fifty years of the world  
Could neither harden nor cloy!

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

What is the secret? 'T is one  
By only the noblest known:  
He has made in every year  
The heart of a boy his own.

And well if our hearts can feel  
That he to them hath returned  
A spark of the courage high  
That ever in his hath burned!

So, here's to the heart of a boy  
That throbs in a manly breast;  
And here's in the grasp of a hand  
What words leave unexpressed!

*April 24, 1905.*

## EARTHSKINE

How filmy, faint, elusive, glows  
The Old Moon in the New! It shows  
What light the Earth from sunshine lent  
Rays back upon the firmament.  
So 't is the Old Moon's hidden worth  
To hold a mirror up to earth,  
Which reads: "In me beside the New  
Thine earthlight matched with sunlight view!"

## A MORNING REVERIE

## A MORNING REVERIE

*Chebeag Island, Maine*

BELOW me curves the horizon line  
Where the slope of the grass and the grey combine.  
You say 't is the sea; I swear 't is the sky  
That over the bank peers dizzily nigh;  
And this, a majestic mountain-top,  
From under whose edge the landscapes drop,  
And yon dark mass on the grey at rest —  
'T is the missing moon by the star-men guessed.  
But the sea — why, who of the sea can speak  
On this aery, uttermost mountain peak,  
Where the wide earth shrinks to a grassy span,  
Meet for the god when he stoops to man.

*July 4, 1905.*

## MIDDAY AND AFTER

WHAT good, you ask of noon and afternoon,  
With all the winds of inspiration stilled?  
Why, then 't is our high joy, by Heaven's boon,  
The mighty plans of morning to upbuild.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

### LOURDES

LOURDES heals the body's ills through the ill of the  
soul, Superstition;  
But, when the body is healed, where is the Lourdes  
for the soul?

### THE WHEEL OF THE WORLD

A WONDROUS wheel is the wheel of the world,  
As it spins o'er its fated track,  
One-half forever forward whirled,  
The other reeling back.

And the man whose being's tiny space  
Is bound to the forward crest,  
With a carol joins in the conquering race  
From the better to the best.

But he whose moment's earthly span  
To the under side is thrust,  
How smiles this life, think ye, to the man  
Flung back through mire or dust?

Yet the caroller's lay is eternally true:  
Onward the world-wheel flies.  
Yea, the backward-borne moves forward too,  
And the falling but sinks to rise.

## THE WHEEL OF THE WORLD

But, for all the crest, the wheel might pace,  
Unstirring, the selfsame round.  
That it rolls ahead, ye may thank the base,  
Crushed prone, with its grip on the ground!

## THE PURPLE BEECH

Not mine to glow in April shine  
A living flame of sunniest green,  
Wherein the new earth, half-divine,  
Streams up in prayer to the Unseen.

On me a pall of gloom is laid,  
A darkling mood, an Arctic frown,  
Which clings, though June, the rose-arrayed,  
With song would laugh my sorrow down;

And still my heart the darkness weighs  
Through boon July, August serene;  
But, when the gold September days  
Smile from their heaven of sapphire sheen,

A thrill of youth, a flush of spring  
Through all my clouded being runs,  
Which lightens as the birds take wing,  
And glows beneath the hastening suns.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

The maples now, which round me flamed,  
Are quenched, and glimmer grey and bare;  
My kin, whose lifelong joyance shamed  
My sadness, blank and deathlike stare.

But I, amid a leafless wood,  
Whence all its fluttering song has flown,  
Find in the frosts an April mood,  
And win content, though late, my own.

## OUTER GREEN ISLE

*Casco Bay, Maine*

O OUTER Green Isle in the sea!  
O uttermost isle in the sea!  
To the west are the land  
And the works of man's hand,  
But all to the eastward of thee  
Is the primal, untamable sea!

To the west, with his towers and his fanes,  
Man has written a line that remains,  
Drawn dark on the sky,  
Proud earth to defy;  
But eastward his fabrics and he,  
How they fly in their fear of the sea!

## OUTER GREEN ISLE

And thou, on thy throne set between,  
Of East and of West art the queen.  
The Moon and the Sun,  
As their circuit they run,  
Upbuild all of gold o'er the sea  
Their pathway from heaven to thee.

Yet never thou tirest, I weet,  
Of the fond, shifting blue at thy feet,  
Now faint, fairy pale,  
Like a bride through her veil,  
Now deeper than sky or the far  
Keen mountains o'erhung by a star.

Not a rain-drop that sinks on thy breast  
But hails thee its Isle of the Blest,  
Where, 'scaping the grave  
Of the blind, bitter wave,  
It blends with thy glad, living green,  
Its life become sheen of thy sheen.

Nor a surf-bow leaps up from the brine,  
With its love-litten radiance trine,  
But to clasp thee and crown,  
And its being to drown  
In the emerald splendor of thee,  
O Outer Green Isle in the sea!

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

### THE THANKS OF THE SONG-WRITERS

*To Frederick Wallace Bancroft*

FROM hundreds of vanished years,  
From thousands of miles away,  
At the call of a magic voice,  
We come, and we fain would stay.

From Scotia's heathery slopes,  
From England's fields a-bloom,  
From Erin's pastures green,  
From the New World's boundless room;

Children of times forgot,  
Straying on scenes unknown,  
Of all who breathed our air,  
Survive but we alone.

Kings and their memory pass,  
The conqueror's glories fade,  
But we live on in the hearts  
That thrill to the songs we made.

Our fame's true guardian, thou,  
Sweet singer of our lays —  
After the world's applause,  
Accept our thanks and praise!

*March 2, 1906.*



## DICHTKUNST

### DICHTKUNST

POET, keep ever the word  
In the background of thy thought;  
So shall the soul be stirred,  
Not only the ear be caught.

### THE BOOK \*

*"The Art Preservative of all Arts"*

HAIL, thou mightiest of all arts,  
Greater than Promethean fire!  
All the rest play soon their parts,  
Serve their hour, and then expire.

Thou the art supreme, whereby  
All the gains through ages won,  
While their mortal founders die,  
Pass in strength from sire to son.

Not that every century owns  
Loftier stature than the last,  
But that each the Book enthrones  
On the lore of all the past.

\* Hymn for the dedication of the Carnegie Library Building, Freeport, Maine, May, 1906.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Rarest gems we set with skill  
Lest they glide unmarked away.—  
Honor him whose generous will  
Here hath set our books to-day.

## THE SONGO RIVER

SLOW in thy tortuous track as grudging Fate,  
When lives by Love made one stagnate apart,  
Dost thou these lakes, reluctant Songo, mate;  
Yet, even as Fate, Love's minister thou art.

## THE VOICE OF KATAHDIN

O MOUNT of the Vision Unbarred!  
O vast sky-shouldering peak!  
Who seest the ships as they pass  
Afar on the rim of the sea;  
Who seest the late sun glint  
On the ocean stream of the north;  
Who seest around at thy feet  
The devious rivers that haste  
With their tribute to south and to north,  
The lakes where the rivers paused  
Smit by a thought of the sea,  
And the lands like islands between;  
Who seest above thee the arch

## THE VOICE OF KATAHDIN

Of a mightier heaven than ours —  
Tell me, in all thou hast seen,  
Where hast thou found the Divine?

Then out of the murmurs grew speech —  
From the wind-wrestling pines on the slopes,  
From the splash of a myriad rills,  
From the echoing caverns within:  
Sacred is all that I see —  
The heavens by day and by night,  
The lands with their forests and glades,  
The lakes eying me and the sky,  
The silvery lacing of streams,  
The eagle that wheels o'er my head,  
The panther that lurks on the bough,  
The insect that hums in the grass,  
The grass, the flowers, and the trees,  
Are sacred all in my sight.

But what, I cried, is Divine?  
Then slowly the Mountain replied:  
One thing alone have I seen  
Betwixt the dust and the stars,  
One thing only Divine —  
The upturned face of a man,  
That, looking aloft beyond me,  
Beyond the unfathomed abyss,  
The moon, the sun, and the stars,  
Beholds and bears as a seal,

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

The light of the Vision Divine,  
A light shed not by the moon  
Nor the sun, nor the uttermost star,  
That the loftiest peak may not catch,  
Nor the wide arms of ocean enfold,  
But it falls from the Radiance Divine  
On the upturned face of a man.

### SUN-UP

LIFT up your eyes, lift up your thoughts, lift up  
your hearts amain,  
The dawn is on the mountains, though the night  
still haunts the plain;  
The night still haunts the valleys, but the hills are  
all aglow;  
Lift up your eyes and your thoughts and your  
hearts as into the world we go!

Bright are the hues of the song-birds and merry  
their madrigale,  
Mellow our muffled hoof-beats on the flowery-  
fragrant vale;  
And lo! o'er the heights in splendor the sun of our  
hope we know,—  
Lift up your eyes and your thoughts and your  
hearts as into the world we go!

## EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

### EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

*By a Classmate at Yale*

OF me shall this be told  
Long hence and far away to envying ears,  
When o'er my age the years  
Their billows of oblivion have rolled:

That all my college days  
I sat in class and chapel side by side  
With Sill, even then our pride,  
As now the land's — when he is past men's praise.

Oft when the preacher read  
Some lesson drawn from wandering Israel's woes,  
Would Sill his brown eyes close,  
And on my shoulder lay his beautiful head.

Still, as the voice droned on,  
The dreamer's fancy flitted unopposed;  
And when the sermon closed,  
Those starry eyes brighter from Dreamland shone.

### IN AUTUMN

Is it a tree  
Or a truant sunset?

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

### ABORIGINAL AUTUMN

BARBARIC in stains of yellow and red,  
The leaves o'ersprinkle the frosty pave;  
They rustle beneath and around my tread;  
And lo! a world three centuries dead  
Leaps into life, and overhead  
Miantonomi's forests wave.

*Providence, Oct. 21, 1906.*

### THOUGHT AND LOVE

THOUGH on the wings of Thought I distance  
The star-vault's pallid bound,  
'T is Love must fill my heart's insistence  
With heaven on earthly ground.

### LONGFELLOW AND THE BIRDS

A CLOUDLESS heaven of Maytime  
Arches the Brunswick plains  
With a soft and lingering splendor  
As the day in fragrance wanes.

Bright in the gilded tree-tops,  
Dark on the blue o'erhead,  
What sudden flight of song-birds,  
On what strange errand sped!

## LONGFELLOW AND THE BIRDS

One way their swift wings bear them —  
To yonder shaded street,  
Where aloft, from an open window,  
A flute calls clear and sweet.

A blue-eyed, boyish player  
Sits in that golden air,  
While sunbeams wreath a glory  
About his auburn hair.

His playing the bird-songs answer  
Impassioned out of the elms,  
Till their very madness of joyance  
The flute-voice overwhelms.

At length the climbing shadows  
Darken window and tree;  
The fluter ends his playing,  
The birds their minstrelsy.

And many a golden even  
For one and another year,  
The feathered songsters gladdened  
That witching call to hear.

But once came leaf and blossom  
When o'er and o'er they sought,  
But never their sweetest pipings  
An answering flute-note brought.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Yet still for many a Maytime  
The song-birds fluttered round,  
When evening lit the tree-tops,  
To hear that magic sound.

But all in vain they sought it,—  
That soft, entrancing strain  
No more should crown their gladness,  
Nor charm their secret pain.

The birds, repining, fancied  
That flute forever still,  
Unweeting how its music  
Had flown o'er plain and hill,

Had crossed the mightiest rivers  
And Ocean's baffling flood,  
While mountain snows and deserts  
No bar before it stood.

For now not song-birds only  
That tender strain have heard,  
But men of every nation  
Its melody hath stirred.

It came from the heart of the singer,  
The blithe air wafts it along,  
And hearts let fall their burdens,  
And leap with answering song.



## A SON OF LIGHT

### A SON OF LIGHT

OUT of the night he came, a heavenly spark,  
Across the day, drinking its glow, he sped,  
Then passed again into the night, and shed  
A wake of fire along the shuddering dark.

### ON THE WINGS OF THE SNOW

OUT of my vanished winters  
One memory sends a glow;  
'T is the face of a child at a window  
Upturned to the falling snow.

His hair streams downward golden,  
And pansy-deep are the eyes  
That he lifts to the flying snowflakes  
Poured endlessly out of the skies.

You deem he is watching them falling;  
Ah! no, on those wings that fly  
With the snow so swiftly downward  
He is mounting in thought on high.

For to him not the snow is falling,  
But he is soaring aloft,  
And the wings that bear him upward  
Are the snowflakes white and soft.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Far, far has the earth receded,  
The end of his way is at hand;  
It looms already above him,  
The portal of Fairyland.

But just as he dimly sees it,  
He starts at a sweet-voiced call,—  
And lo! he stands at the window,  
Watching the snowflakes fall.

In a moment more he had found it,  
The land of the story-books' lore,  
But now he has lost it forever,  
The wings will not lift him more.

Since then long leagues he has journeyed,  
But never again might go  
So near to the Gates of Wonder  
As then on the wings of the snow.

## THOREAU ON WACHUSETT

WACHUSETT thrilled  
To its frostiest veins  
At the step of its lover.

"Now am I repaid,"  
It said, "for all  
My lonely watch

## THOREAU ON WACHUSETT

Since the dawn of time.  
He comes at last;  
With loving foot he presses  
My granite bosom;  
He breathes my air,  
Which I have made sweet for him  
With starry dew,  
And he will bear away  
My image in his heart  
To inspire and solace  
Through him the world.  
He loves me;  
Therefore he knows me,  
Both What I am and Why."

## THE BOND OF LOVE

BETTER Love's bond should snap with the rending  
of soul and spirit  
Than it should fritter away and part we never  
knew when.

## THE LURE

EVER straining up the slope  
Of ever-lengthening seas,  
While just beyond us, whispers Hope,  
Lie shores of golden ease;

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Ever panting on the brink  
Of heights that we but climb  
To gaze on loftier heights, which sink  
Still beneath more sublime; —

Soon or late the spent ship goes  
To deeps below the storm;  
Soon or late the blinding snows  
Enwrap the traveller's form;

And then the placid stars, at rest  
From pity as from pain,  
Look down on wave and mountain crest  
Where newer strugglers strain.

## THE FLINT-CARVER

YEAR after year  
The stubborn rock with wasting steel I hew,  
And when at last, grudging, it yields to view  
Dimly an outline there, a feature here,  
The vision, still benighted, will not dawn  
Out of the stone wherein it lurks withdrawn.

Foredoomed to fail!  
Not mine, alas! not mine to slip the veil  
Of sudden beauty dizzying sense and soul;

## THE FLINT-CARVER

At best I leave behind me but a scroll  
That reads: "Here passed by one who in the block  
Saw beauty prisoned, but could not ope the lock."

Yet I have guessed,  
Dreamt, willed, a stone all panting for the stroke  
Should free the winged beauty in its breast,  
Meeter for soul than ever flesh awoke,  
And still outrunning hand and thought and dream,—  
Until I swooned, irradiate with its gleam.

But morn by morn  
Fate thrusts me back before my flinty block.—  
O God! if Earth had never yielded rock,  
But only dust for mockery and scorn! —  
Then welcome, Flint! and be our benison:  
"Beauty half seen is more than all else won."

## TRUE LOVE

*The Soul and the Ideal*

HE

LONG ago, long ago,  
In a far and fairer land,  
There I wandered with my true love  
Hand in hand, hand in hand;  
And was it earth or heaven,

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Where this joy to me was given? —  
Nay, I do not rightly know,  
It was all so long ago.

SHE

Long ago, long ago,  
Were ye children twain that went,  
With no thought of any morrow,  
In your souls' divine content?  
While ye wandered blossom-hearted,  
Did a storm-cloud rise that parted  
Thee from her in pain and woe,  
Long ago, long ago?

HE

Long ago, long ago,  
From my true love I was torn;  
Yea, they drove me, bowed and broken,  
Through an empty world to mourn.  
For we loved as never mortals  
Loved since Eden closed her portals,—  
Nay, not heaven itself can show  
Love like ours, long ago.

SHE

Long ago, long ago,  
In a land as Eden fair,  
From my side they tore my true love,  
And they left me but despair.

## TRUE LOVE

Now the world in vain I wander,  
All my youth in tears I squander,  
Till I doubt my love would know  
Her he cherished long ago.

HE

Long ago, long ago,  
Did he fold thy breathing charms  
In a clasp the high gods envied  
Till they tore him from thine arms?

SHE

But my love they could not sever;  
That was his and his forever!

HE

Only two loved ever so!

BOTH

We who love as long ago!

## COLD SPRING

*Providence, Rhode Island*

HERE, welling upward into light,  
Thy cooling waters burst,  
Where once the brown deer in his flight  
Bent low to slake his thirst.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

Here dipped the bird his thankful bill,  
In summer's cloudless noons;  
The stars thy dim pool mirrored still,  
Between the summer moons.

Canonicus beside thy bank  
Flung down his hunter spoil,  
And here the great-souled Williams drank,  
New-landed on thy soil.

Here youth and age and toil and play  
Two centuries drank their fill,  
And found, for all it gave away,  
Thy cup o'erflowing still.

But lost thou liest under heaps  
Piled by an ingrate hand,  
And now thy sweet name only keeps  
Thy memory in the land.

## CONTENT UNKNOWN

SOME day some reader shall discover me,  
And then what I have seen the world shall see.  
But, should I never come into my own,  
What matters it? I am content unknown.



## A PORTRAIT PAINTER

### A PORTRAIT PAINTER

SENT to eternize an age in the features of hero and  
saint,  
It bids him make fools in flesh immortal fools in  
paint.

### BEFORE THE MASTERS

THERE in its calm perfection sounds the word,  
Full-fraught with power to make the worn Earth  
new.  
But all in vain ye tell it who have heard;  
'T is Life alone can make us hear it too.

### COLOGNE CATHEDRAL AT NIGHT

THE utmost reach of human Thought  
Fails of this wonder Faith has wrought;  
Nor widest Fancy quite can win  
To fold the vast cathedral in.  
The yearning Heaven seems to part  
To take the vision to its heart,  
And Earth is proud to lift on high  
This changeling of the clouds and sky.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

### THE BELLS OF COLOGNE

THE mighty bells loud booming  
High in the lordly Dom  
Leave all the stunned air swooning  
Like surges dashed in foam.

Below, by vault and portal,  
The shuddering echoes roll,  
As were each stone a mortal,  
Each sound its wandering soul.

### HELENA

HER presence fans the frost of age to fire,  
And sweeps raw youth flaming in strange desire.

### THE RHINE AT BASLE

To what shall I liken thy sound,  
O deep-toned Rhine of Basle?  
The dash of waves on the shore,  
The beating of rain on the roof,  
The roar of wind in the pines? —  
All these are strains of thy voice,  
And yet is the voice thine own,

## THE RHINE AT BASLE

Upgathered from notes of the streams  
That spring from their cradles of ice  
To round thy tumultuous flood,  
O green-maned Lion of Basle,  
O free republican Rhine.

## SCHILLER'S MIRROR

THE fickle glass long since forgot his face;  
But Schiller wouldst thou see,  
Open his book, and there his features trace,  
Lit from Eternity!

## MONT BLANC FROM GENEVA

AT set of sun I paced the quay;  
Mont Blanc, all rosy, smiled on me.  
No faery fortalice built of moonbeams  
Was ever aerier light than he.

Soon into darkness drooped his gleam;  
The shore lamps glittered in the stream,  
And the mighty, snow-crowned "monarch of  
mountains"  
Was only a memory and a dream.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

### PILATE

O PILATE, rueful Pilate, what a vile mistake you  
made  
That you did n't drown yourself *before* the Just  
One you betrayed.  
The world had then escaped God knows what  
wasted ink and breath,  
And been saved much better long ago by a Life  
than by a Death.

*Lucerne, Aug. 17, 1907.*

### MY GRANDFATHER

*Written on Crossing the Grand Banks*

SOMEWHERE along this desolate shoal  
Thou liest from whom my life I drew.  
Sleep sweetly, tender heart and true,  
While waves and centuries o'er thee roll.

### UNCERTAINTIES

INTO this world I came, I know not why;  
Through it I fare, not knowing to what end;  
I only know that from it I must hie;  
But know not when, nor whither I shall wend.

## TO AN ANCIENT GRAVE-STONE MAKER

### TO AN ANCIENT GRAVE-STONE MAKER ON THE ATLANTIC

FINE irony Fate here has wrought;  
At sea thy boasted craft is naught.  
Though one lay drowned by every wave,  
Thou couldst not mark a single grave.  
Thy works are for the land alone;  
The waves that claim will mark their own;  
And shall when all that in thee trust,  
Thou, and thy works, have turned to dust.

### ON A BIRTHDAY

*To A. G. T.*

NOT thine but ours this day shall prove.  
All others in the year that be  
Thou makest thine by deeds of love:  
This day is ours — to give to thee.

*Nov. 20, 1907.*

### SLEEP AND DEATH

WE know not when we fall asleep,  
But only that we wake;  
Herein may they who death foreweep  
A cheering lesson take.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

We shall not know when last we grope  
In Earth's descending night,  
But only that our eyes we ope  
On Heaven's morning light.

*New Year's Day, 1908.*

## THE SLEEPLESS POET TO HIS CLOCK

"TIME is! Time was!" Thy clangor triumphs o'er  
My baffled will. Even so thy summons rude  
Shall spell thy doom with "Time shall be no  
more!"  
When I have passed where Time did ne'er in-  
trude.

## URANIA

Too confident of my imagined might  
I toiled, O Muse, with painful thought to light  
The fires of heavenly poesy; but there came  
Only a bitter and a stifling smoke,  
Till thou didst breathe on it; then light awoke,  
And what before was darkness leaped in flame.

## ZURICH FROM THE RIGI

NORTHWARD I saw thy myriad lamps aglow,  
A glittering, jeweled sandal worn with pride

## ZURICH FROM THE RIGI

Even by star-crowned Night; where white Noon  
died,  
The moon hung golden over fields of snow,  
Touching with tenderest flush the peaks below,  
From the dark Myths, the storied lake beside,  
O'er serried crag and cleft, to Heaven's bride,  
The Jungfrau, pale with prescience of her woe.

When from behind the silhouettes of dawn  
The level streamers, westward shooting, kissed  
Snow-field and cliff to rose and amethyst,  
Across the turquoise lake, the emerald lawn  
Of hills and woods, I saw thee shy withdrawn,  
The faery city of the morning mist.

## LIFE MORE ABUNDANT

MUST every province of her sway  
By man from Nature riven  
But lure him farther still away  
From quiet and from Heaven?

Yes, from the Heaven the cave-man dreamt,  
The quiet of the clod.—  
All paths his feet can e'er attempt  
Begin and end in God!

# THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

## THE TWO ARROWS

### FIRST ARROW

THY billet, brother ?

### SECOND ARROW

To cleanse the stain  
From a soldier's honor.  
But one month wed,  
His ring upon her,  
By night and alone,  
False and fain,  
She stole to another.  
So am I sped  
His wrong to atone.  
But what is thine errant ?

### FIRST ARROW

O piteous warrant !  
The fondest of lovers,  
O'ersea returning,  
His lady discovers,  
For him still yearning,  
By kindred constrained,  
The pawn of their pride,  
A warrior's bride.  
What refuge remained ?  
For her bosom but me;  
For his own the sword.



## THE TWO ARROWS

BOTH

Alas for the word!  
O wretched we!  
In the same white breast  
Together we rest  
Wet with her blood.  
O had we never  
Been hewn from the wood!  
Had we slept in the quiver!  
Weird woeful to dree!  
And all for the dross  
Of gold and a name.  
O pitiless flame!  
O infinite loss!  
Thou, Love, on thy throne,  
Canst thou guard not thine own?

## EARTH SONSHIP

O WORLD, be with me not so much  
That I no more shall thrill  
At Springtime's first caressing touch,  
The earliest's bluebird's trill;

No more shall hear in April dreams,  
Or waking or asleep,  
My boyhood's music of the streams  
Down rocky dales that sweep.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

In cities let me tread the wild,  
Or breast the welcoming sea; —  
So keep me still, sweet Earth, a child,  
Not of the World, but thee!

*April 10, 1908.*

## TO MY FATHER AT SEVENTY-FIVE

AMID thy children's children and thy books,  
Thy ready tools, thy garden's teeming mold,  
Peace on thy lips and health in all thy looks,  
Thou teachest the fine art of growing old.

## WINDFALLS

O MILTON, mountain soul,  
One lungful of thy larger air were worth  
Whole stifling roods of this pent atmosphere!

To make men think what they but felt before,—  
The poet's art is this, yet how much more!

Who may hie home at night  
From farthest wandering  
Never strays from home.

O'er suns and systems overthrown  
Love shall live to clasp its own.

## WINDFALLS

Oh! a painter gay is the autumn day,  
For he dyes the waters blue,  
And the greenwood tree with a blazonry  
That summer never knew.

Stand, while Life's bolts are hurled,  
Four-cornered to the world.

The sinister flash of a swift-stayed smile.

The Muse o'ersought will let thee vainly woo;  
But slighted, see the proud one turn and sue!

Would it be sweet to think,  
If I should die to-day there is one heart  
Would break ere nightfall?

Fancy's airy web that snares  
The flying feet of fame.

The unfamiliar way seems ever long.

Horned like the leaping flame.

The ghost of the inverted moon  
Blankly rebukes the day.

The silver clouds of April afternoons.

## THE LIBRARIAN OF THE DESERT

As flaming and cold as a painted Hell.

Thoughts that beggar the eternities.

Those nothings that make excellence perfection.

For Love is Love,— one Heaven at least is real.  
Yea, one thing is eternal, even though  
Our own hearts fail from it, and that is Love.

Not the fact but only the act of possession delights  
us.

System conquers all things, even the users of  
system.

Much to say, but more to convey, is Poetry's  
province.

Manhood's the test; not going with the crowd,  
Nor fighting shy; not rags nor silks; not hunger  
Nor fulness; but the MAN they bring to pass.

Oh! sigh not for the wonders that shall be,  
The books, inventions, works, we shall not see,  
For *then* our hands shall hold of all discoveries  
The master-key.

WINDFALLS

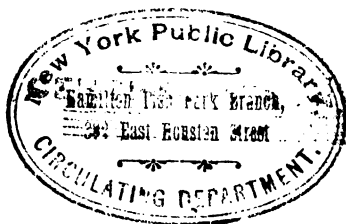
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"Through me the way is to the woful town,  
Through me the way to everlasting woe,  
Through me the way among the folk forlorn.  
'T was righteousness that stirred my lofty maker;  
Me wrought the might of God, the highest  
wisdom

And earliest love. Till me were not things made,  
But everlasting; I forever last:

Ye who come in, leave every hope behind."

— *Inferno* III., 1-9.



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